

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CANADIAN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE REPORT

FOLLOWING FULL TEXT OF JULY 28 VANCOUVER PROVINCE EDITORIAL
ENTITLED "WHAT'S WRONG WITH NORMAL RELATIONS?" BEGIN TEXT.
IF WE WERE TO TAKE SERIOUSLY EVERY STUDY OF THE SUBJECT MADE
ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BORDER, CANADA-US RELATIONS WOULD BE EITHER
VERY GOOD OR VERY BAD, ALTERNATELY. THEY WOULD NEVER BE "NORMAL".
YET OUR CONTACTS ARE AS FRIENDLY AS ANY BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES IN
THE WORLD AND BETTER THAN MOST.
PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY ARE, IN FACT, SO NORMAL, THE PEOPLE WHO
PERPETRATE THESE FREQUENT REPORTS ON US MUST SEEK TO ENLARGE
THE DIFFERENCES THAT DO OCCUR AND SEE THEM AS THE EVE OF DOOMSDAY.
SO IT IS WITH THE LATEST MISSIVE TO THE CANADIAN PEOPLE FROM THE
CANADIAN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF THE C.D. HOWE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
AND THE U.S. NATIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION.
AS IF IT HAD TOUCHED THE HOLY GRAIL OF TRUTH, THIS COMMITTEE ASKS
WHETHER "CANADA HAS GIVEN SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO THE DISTINCTION
BETWEEN WHAT IS POLITICALLY DESIRABLE IN THE SHORT RUN AND
WHAT IS ECONOMICALLY NECESSARY IN THE LONG RUN." THIS
DOESN'T SOUND MARKEDLY DIFFERENT FROM SOME OF THE COMMENTS
OF A FORMER US AMBASSADOR HERE, WILLIAM PORTER, WHO TALKED

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ABOUT THE "BAD TURN OF EVENTS" BETWEEN CANADA AND THE US WHICH

HAD TO BE "TACKLED." OR FROM THOSE OF CURRENT US AMBASSADOR THOMAS ENDERS THAT IN SOME AREAS "WE ARE IN DANGER OF LETTING OUR DIFFERENCES DOMINATE THE RELATIONSHIP AND BLOCK OUT OUR OPPORTUNITIES."

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN REMARKS LIKE THOSE WOULD HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED HERE AS VEILED THREATS FROM A BIGGER, MORE POWERFUL NEIGHBOR. ONE HOPES THE TIME HAS COME FOR SUCH EXCHANGES TO BE PUT AND KEPT IN PERSPECTIVE.

CANADA IS A YOUNG, VIBRANT NATION EMERGING FROM THE CONCOON OF BRITISH EMPIRE AND OVERWHELMING AMERICAN INFLUENCE. THE FACT THAT IT WORRIES ABOUT DOMINANT FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN OUR ECONOMY AND THE POWERFUL CULTURAL FLOW FROM THE SOUTH REFLECTS NOT AN UNEASE ABOUT NATIONHOOD BUT A GROWING SELF-CONFIDENCE. OUR CONERN TO FORGE A NEW CONFEDERATION BETWEEN FRENCH AND ENGLISH CANADIANS HAS PERHAPS LED US TO BE SOMEWHAT MORE INTROSPECTIVE. BUT THAT IS A FAR CRY FROM A HABIT OF TAKING AMERICANS FOR GRANTED, AS SENATOR GEORGE VAN ROGGEN HAS ACCUSED US OF DOING FOR TOO MANY YEARS.

IN SOVEREIGN NATION WHAT IS POLITICALLY DESIRABLE SHOULD NOT BE CONTRARY TO THE ECONOMIC NECESSITIES BUT NEITHER SHOULD IT BE UNNECESSARILY SUBSERVIENT TO THEM. AND IT ISN T IN CANADA. MOST OF US HAVE A WELL DEVELOPED SENSE OF SELF-INTEREST THAT CAN BE COUNTED ON TO KEEP US FROM FALLING INTO THE PIT.

SO WHAT'S TO BE DONE? NOTHING VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE'RE DOING NOW. PROBLEMS THAT ARISE BETWEEN OUR TWO FRIENDLY COUNTRIES ARE BEING HANDLED SOMETIMES BETTER, SOMETIMES WORSE THAN THEY OUGHT TO BE. GOVERNMENTS COULD PERHAPS DO A BETTER JOB OF MONITORING EVENTS IN EACH OTHER'S COUNTRY TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS ARISING FROM SURPRISE DECISIONS.

TO US, FOR INSTANCE, APPEARED TO MISINTERPRET THE REMOVAL OF TAX CONCESSIONS FROM TIME MAGAZINE AND READERS' DIGEST AS AN ATTACK ON AMERICAN INTERESTS IN GENERAL RATHER THAN THE REMOVAL OF AN ANOMALY THAT SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ALLOWED IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE US SHOULD HAVE BEEN AWARE THAT THOSE TWO PUBLICATIONS ENJOYED ADVANTAGES OPEN TO NO OTHER AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS SELLING IN CANADA AND THAT THEIR ADVANTAGES WERE AGAINST THE INTERESTS NOT ONLY OF CANADIANS BUT OF AMERICANS AS WELL.

THE CANADIAN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE PERPETUATES A DISTORTED AMERICAN UNCLASSIFIED

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VIEW WHEN IT PUTS THE EMPHASIS IN THE AFFAIR ON "CULTURAL NATIONALISM," AS IF THAT WERE SOMETHING TO BE ABHORRED. SO THE COMMITTEE IS ACTUALLY FOSTERING MISUNDERSTANDING OF A SITUATION WHICH HAS BEEN DEALT WITH PERHAPS NOT TO EVERYONE'S SATISFACTION BUT CERTAINLY IN A WAY THAT HAS ALLOWED IT TO SLIP INTO HISTORY.

THERE ARE NO PERFECT SOLUTIONS IN HUMAN AFFAIRS. THOSE WHO THINK THERE ARE LIVE IN A DREAM WORLD. CONTRARY TO THE HAND-

WRINGERS, CANADA AND THE US HANDLE THEIR DIFFERENCES VERY WELL
INDEED AND WE NEED HAVE LITTLE FEAR ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OUR
RELATIONSHIPS. END TEXT. BURGOON

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